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ABSTRACT

In an effort to increase the effectiveness of international studies and to improve resource sharing among institutions, Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), in Michigan, has created a consortium for international studies and foreign languages among 15 Michigan community colleges and Michigan State University (MSU). The consortium was funded by the federal government to design, establish, and operate a regionally based, globally focused, "International Studies and Foreign Language Program Development Institute for Community Colleges." Over a 3-year period, the consortium will assist 21 other two-year colleges in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Michigan in establishing or expanding their international studies and foreign-language curricula. In the mid-1980s, KVCC added, as part of its core general education mission, the integration of international education into the college mainstream. Since then, the college's 54-member International Studies Group has infused 47 international modules into 29 courses, developed or revised 22 international courses, and established 24 foreign language courses. The college's International Studies Program currently enrolls 150 students, and KVCC's commitment to international studies is reflected in four externally funded projects emphasizing consortia building and curriculum development efforts. Other international education activities involving KVCC and other consortia members include faculty attendance at mini-seminars sponsored by MSU, 1- and 2-day consultancies with MSU curriculum experts, summer study abroad programs, and "sister college" linkages with overseas institutions. (PAA)

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PARTNERSHIPS IN INTERNATIONALIZATION: THE TITLE VIA AND BEACON PROJECTS

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Partnerships in Internationalization:
The Title VIa and Beacon Projects

Adding global dimensions to undergraduate academic programs and bringing knowledge of the world into local education is no longer a wise option or a creative innovation. For higher education, it has become a necessity.

Institutions of higher education and K-12 school systems are facing heavy demands and pressure from business, government and the community. They are under fire to produce students who have the necessary global awareness, knowledge and skills to function in a shrinking world community that is becoming increasingly connected, interactive and interdependent.

On the other side of the education equation, students are calling for a fundamental grasp of the key forces and elements at work in a global system. They realize that this awareness should touch all disciplines in the college community. Faculty and curriculum organizers have reached the same conclusion. If students are to function competently in a demanding international environment, they must know the territory.

There is growing demand for "non-traditional" foreign languages and for world awareness as a means for effective cross-cultural communications and for fuller comprehension of other societies. In order for us to understand what makes us so different, it is important to understand what makes us the same.

Teachers across the country are exploring interdisciplinary blendings. Making connections across disciplines and searching for

an integrated core curriculum, they pursue infusion models and methods for teaching culturally based foreign languages. It's important to bring all of these regional efforts under one umbrella so that effective programs can be replicated and non-successful methods can be winnowed.

In Michigan, a strong web of relationships exists between community colleges regarding international education. There is a need to strengthen that web by sharing more resources and by extending its scope to include community colleges in neighboring states.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College created a consortium for international studies and foreign languages among 15 Michigan community colleges by building upon past and ongoing cooperative ventures with Michigan State University and the University of Hawaii.

This consortium was formed to design, establish and operate a regionally based, globally focused "International Studies and Foreign Language Program Development Institute for Community Colleges." It will eventually assist 21 other two-year post-secondary schools in the Midwest over a three-year period.

These colleges in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin and Michigan will be selected on the basis of their interest and commitment in establishing or expanding their international studies and foreign-language curricula on their campuses.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College received a three-year, $250,728 Title VIa grant from the U.S. Department of Education to

lead the effort in establishing the Midwest consortium, and to plan, establish and operate the three-phase institute.

The assistance will partially fund the work of teams of faculty and administrators from the 15 Michigan community colleges and from MSU in forming the consortium, organizing the institute, and beginning operations. The grant will also partially finance the efforts of 126 faculty and administrators from the 21 selected midwestern community colleges who will come to the KVCC campus to plan, develop and launch approaches for internationalizing the curricula at their home colleges.

Another objective for the selectees will be to develop a strategic plan for starting programs in international studies and foreign languages, if such documents are lacking at their institutions.

The institute-building consortium will focus on: (1) curriculum development; (2) teaching strategies; (3) creating courses in international studies and foreign languages; (4) revising existing courses by infusing global components and modules; (5) finding innovative ways to select forms of international education and integrate them into mainstream learning; and (6) building a cross-institutional network that will nourish the study of foreign languages and global issues.

KVCC's faculty and the nearly 11,000 students they reach each semester have benefitted tremendously by having their horizons stretched. This project seeks to extend that global awareness to hundreds of thousands of others enrolled in two-year colleges

throughout the Midwest.

Leaders in education, government and business have repeatedly called for improved international, transcultural and global awareness among the American population in the name of national progress, world leadership and individual achievement. Many of the participants in this project took advantage of the support coming from those leaders to begin working toward these objectives as early as the late 1970s.

In the mid-1980s, Kalamazoo Valley Community College added the integration of international education into the college mainstream as a key component of its core general-education mission. This thrust was recommended by faculty and administrators, and heartily endorsed by the KVCC Board of Trustees.

The college's 54-member International Studies Group continues to develop international-curriculum materials and to support a broad variety of activities with global dimensions in 26 academic and vocational disciplines.

The group's track record so far is the infusion of 47 international modules into 29 courses, the development or revision of 22 international courses, and the establishment of 24 foreign-language courses in French, Russian, German and Spanish. The college is also exploring strategies to offer instructions in Chinese and Japanese.

In addition, KVCC students can enroll in courses in international studies and foreign languages at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College and Davenport College through an

exchange program orchestrated by the Kalamazoo Consortium of Higher Education, an organization of college presidents.

The college's International Studies Program currently has more than 150 enrollees pursuing either an associate of arts degree or a one-year certificate in international studies. KVCC's Business Division is also offering an associate of arts degree in international marketing.

The KVCC family of students, faculty, staff and administrators has used this base to organize and participate in a spectrum of international and transcultural activities involving colleagues from colleges and high schools in the region, local business leaders, and citizens in the community with global experience.

Conferences, workshops, colloquia, clinics and lectures on international studies have featured KVCC representatives as both attendees and as presenters. Visits to nations on all five continents have added to the faculty's expertise on the wealth and diversity of international resources and facilities.

The college's commitment to international studies and foreign languages has been reflected by a considerable allocation of human, monetary and material resources to assist four related projects that received external funding:

(a) A two-year U.S. Department of Education grant (1989-91) under Title VIa that supported major curriculum-development efforts, professional growth, and international activities.

(b) A two-year grant (1990-92), awarded by the W. K.

Kellogg Foundation and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), to work with the University of Hawaii in adding a Pacific Rim awareness to KVCC courses.

(c) Being designated as a Beacon College under another two-year Kellogg-AACC grant (1991-93) to form and lead a regional consortium of eight community colleges. The objectives were to build their international programs, revise curricula, jointly sponsor events with a global focus, and to share resources.

(d) A U.S. Department of Education Title VIb grant (1991-92) for a collaborative curriculum project in international business and economics with the Michigan State University (MSU) Center for International Business Education.

These four externally funded projects have allowed KVCC to map a five-year plan for integrating aspects of international education throughout the college's programs. This three-phase strategy involves:

(1) Globalizing the General Studies Division and establishing the KVCC International Studies Program.

(2) Globalizing two more college divisions -- Health and Sciences, and Business.

(3) Internationalizing the Technical Division.

KVCC and MSU have structured a close and effective relationship in international education among faculty colleagues who are working together under the auspices of the Center for

Advanced Studies in International Development (CASID) on the East Lansing campus and the university's International Business Centers.

As part of the three-phase institute, MSU will be instrumental in planning "mini-seminars" on topical international and global issues at each participating college during the academic year. Invited to these one-day or half-day sessions will be faculty, students and community residents from host and neighboring colleges. These programs will enhance international awareness in the campus community and foster support for the continued globalization of curricula.

Community college faculty will also be invited to visit the MSU campus for one- or two-day consultancies with university colleagues who have expertise in the curricula they are revising or creating on their home campuses. This will also provide an opportunity to tap into MSU's immense and varied global resources.

MSU's stable of "cultural consultants" annually includes more than 2,500 international students and visiting scholars. MSU has an ongoing "training" program to help them work with both K-12 and post-secondary students throughout Michigan's Lower Peninsula. These "emissaries" will be brought to the campuses of the participating community colleges to assist in "authenticating" a wide variety of courses.

Joining KVCC and MSU in this institute-forming consortium are Delta College, Glen Oaks Community College, Gogebic Community College, Grand Rapids Community College, Highland Park Community

College, Jackson Community College, Lansing Community College, Macomb Community College, Mott Community College, North Central Michigan College, Northwestern Michigan College, Oakland Community College, St. Clair County Community College and Wayne County Community College.

The consortial colleges, individually or jointly, continue to undertake many study/work-abroad programs for students and faculty around the world, especially during the summer. Joint efforts in Mexico, Venezuela, Japan, India, Kenya, Spain, France and Great Britain have proven very successful.

Over the years, Michigan community colleges have benefitted in attending or co-sponsoring a bounty of transcultural/international activities such as lecture series, colloquia, workshops, visiting scholars, campus festivals, rotating speaker bureaus, mini-seminars and roundtable discussions.

Michigan's two-year colleges also undertake, either jointly or collectively, overseas exchanges with higher-education institutions in other nations. A number of "sister college" links has emerged. Such relationships allow these colleges to provide unique international and foreign-language training to employees at local businesses and to teachers at all levels of education.

Michigan's community colleges are a powerful agent for positive, beneficial change and for training citizens for an interdependent world. As illustrated by this project, Kalamazoo Valley Community College has been at the forefront in expanding these efforts and, more important, to extend the opportunity to

other colleges to pursue similar endeavors.

While the agenda for international education is demanding, the rewards are fruitful. To harvest the maximum benefits, collaborative ventures in funding, expertise and experience are wise strategies. Institutions of higher education working cooperatively in a region can maximize the impact of these efforts on their students and staff.

These projects reflect the value of having a coordinated agenda and signify a consensus among the participants for reaching objectives in international studies and foreign languages. Yet, there is also enough flexibility to tailor strategies and methods to fit the needs, resources and environment for each institution.